

RN99101

Serial Number: 10/049,575

AMENDMENT AFTER FINAL

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

It is asserted that these amendments do not add new matter and are supported by the specification and claims as originally filed. Entry of these claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 14-25 and 29-31 have been rejected.

Claim 14 has been amended.

Claims 17-22, 29 and 30 are kept unchanged.

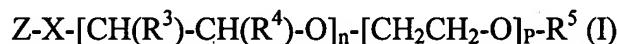
Claims 15, 16, 23-25, and 31 have been canceled.

Claims 14, 17-22, 29 and 30 are pending in the application.

Claims 14-25 and 29-31 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

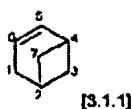
Claims 14-25, 27 and 29-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as obvious over WO 96/01245.

The claimed invention relates to a process for degreasing a hard metal surface, comprising the step of using an aqueous medium comprising at least one compound employed in a concentration of from 0.01 to 10 g/l, having the following formula (I):



wherein:

- Z represents a group having the following formula:



wherein:

- X represents $-\text{CH}_2\text{-CH}_2\text{-O-}$,
- R^3 and R^4 , which are identical or different, represent hydrogen or a methyl group, provided that at least one of groups R^3 or R^4 is other than hydrogen,
- R^5 represents hydrogen,
- n is an integer or a fractional number from 3 to 5 inclusive, and
- p is an integer or a fractional number from 6 to 10, limits excluded.

The Examiner asserts that the unexpected result showed in the previous amendment was a "little better" within the claimed y range when x is 3. Applicant respectfully submits that the improvement shown is greater by far than a "little better". Indeed, examples and comparative examples show a degreasing time dramatically reduced with the claimed compounds. Degreasing time decreases of 75% for the worse comparative example, or of 33% for the best comparative example [(45-30)/45]. Improvements of 33%-75% in the instant technical field should be considered as much more than a "little better".

WO 96/01245 only teaches that the performance of a surfactant effect may be modified by manipulating the degrees of ethoxylation and propoxylation. However, a surfactant effect is clearly distinct from a degreasing effect. Thus improving the surfactant effect does not necessarily mean that greasing will be improved. Greasing is a process involving much more than having a simple surfactant effect. One might have a compound having good surfactant properties with poor degreasing effects. Therefore, the person of ordinary skill in the surfactant art would not have considered

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the teaching of manipulating the degrees of ethoxylation and propoxylation for modifying surfactant properties as relevant for modifying degreasing. There is no technical rationale for saying that improving degreasing when manipulating the degrees of ethoxylation and propoxylation was expected in view of the reference. For these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner now reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 14-25, 27 and 29-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as obvious over WO 96/01245.

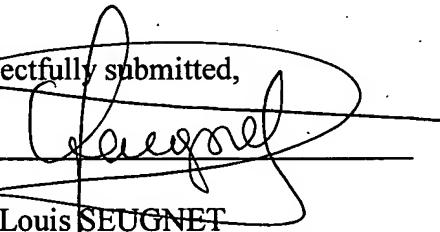
In view of the preceding remarks, it is asserted that the patent application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any question concerning these remarks that would further advance prosecution of the claims to allowance, the examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned agent at (609) 860-4180. A notice of allowance is respectfully solicited.

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Rhodia Inc.
259 Prospect Plains Road
CN7500
Cranbury, NJ 08512

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

Jean-Louis SEUGNET
Limited Recognition under 37 CFR §
10.9(b) enclosed.
Tel : (609) 860-4180
Fax: (609) 860-0503